Chapter 8: Data Collection Recommendations

Reliable data is key to creating systems level changes. In the domestic and sexual violence fields, data is currently not collected systematically. There is a lot of anecdotal evidence, but hard numbers are also needed in order to make the case for the critical systems changes proposed in this State Plan. Recommendations in this section pertain to the collection of data from medical settings, the criminal justice system and victim services.

Recommendations

Data Collection

The Uniform Law Enforcement Domestic Violence Statistical Report developed by the Governor's Office is designed to collect data on law enforcement's response to domestic violence. This report represents some of the only comprehensive domestic violence law enforcement data available in the State and is primarily used for educating the public and applying for funding. The form was recently streamlined with questions to elicit more simplistic data in an attempt to increase response rate and data accuracy.

Data Collection: 8.1

Continue to streamline the Uniform Law Enforcement Domestic Violence Statistical Report used by the Governor's Office for collecting law enforcement data.

Data Collection: 8.2

Support the continued development of the Court Protective Order Repository (CPOR) by the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC).

In 1999, the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) developed a database, the Court Protective Order Repository (CPOR), to allow court staff to input Orders of Protection and Injunctions Against Harassment into a system that can be accessed by law enforcement in the field and modified by judges in courts across the state. CPOR is a data collection tool, data repository, and data exchange mechanism for law enforcement agencies and the courts. Not only does CPOR increase the state's ability to collect domestic violence data, it also enables law enforcement to enforce violations of Orders of Protection with an electronic record in the field, greatly assisting to increase victim safety and abuser accountability.

Data Collection: 8.3

Support the continued development of the National Incident Based Reporting System (NIBRS) by the Arizona Department of Public Safety (DPS).

NIBRS is part of a national effort to increase the amount of data that is collected on all crimes, including domestic and sexual violence. The benefits of using this type of system are that it will provide an ability to do greater crime analysis and give more detailed, accurate data. When completed, NIBRS will furnish information on nearly every major criminal justice issue facing law enforcement today. And once fully implemented in Arizona, the prevalence of domestic and sexual violence will be easier to determine in Arizona.

Data Collection: 8.4

Support the use of an automated, consistent case management tool by domestic violence shelters.

ShelterBase is a database system for domestic violence shelters and is intended to create greater efficiency by allowing shelters to enter all information about a client into one database. The database provides specific reports for each funding agency. This method of streamlined reporting is a tool for providers to create aggregate data on the clients they serve, thereby creating more effective program delivery. Providers need training and on-going technical assistance in order to have the database work as an effective and valid tool.

The Department of Public Safety (DPS) developed the Sex Crimes Analysis Network (SCAN) in 2001. SCAN allows law enforcement to compare profiles of sex offenders and child abductors on a statewide basis. When fully implemented, SCAN will help law enforcement to capture more sexually violent criminals in Arizona. The FBI created VICAP in the mid-1980s to facilitate communication, cooperation, and coordination between the nation's law enforcement agencies, and to support their efforts to investigate, identify, track, apprehend, and prosecute violent serial and repeat offenders. Supporting Arizona law enforcement's participation on both of these databases is an important component of public safety.

Data Collection: 8.5

Increase the prosecution of sex crimes through the widespread use of the Sex Crimes Analysis Network (SCAN) and the Violent Criminal Apprehension Program (VICAP).

Medical settings not only serve as excellent points of prevention and early intervention for domestic and sexual violence, but also provide opportunities to collect data on victims/survivors and abusers. The Center for Disease Control (CDC) has created ideal data elements for collection in medical settings. An analysis needs to be conducted in Arizona to ascertain what is currently being collected by medical professionals and what data still needs to be incorporated into the medical field's data collection efforts. A training curriculum should also be developed on how to collect data on domestic and sexual violence from patients in a manner that is safe for victims.

Data Collection: 8.6

Encourage the medical community to create and implement a comprehensive, statewide data collection initiative on the incidence of domestic and sexual violence.

The mission of the National Domestic Violence Fatality Review Initiative is to provide technical assistance to support review of domestic violence related deaths with the underlying objectives to prevent them in the future, preserve safety of battered women, and hold accountable both the perpetrators of domestic violence and the multiple agencies and organizations that come into contact with the parties. Fatality reviews provide valuable information regarding the circumstances that lead to domestic violence related homicides, which can help shape and inform policy decisions for reform.

Data Collection: 8.7

Encourage local communities to develop Domestic Violence Fatality Review Teams.

Data Collection: 8.8

Build capacity of domestic violence shelters to participate on the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS).

The US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has commissioned all communities receiving funding from them to implement HMIS in order to better coordinate the delivery of services for people experiencing homelessness. HMIS is a web-based system that allows service providers to share information about clients and services offered to these clients. In order for domestic violence providers to effectively participate, more needs to be done to ensure the safe, secure and confidential exchange of information to protect victims. Otherwise, a process will need to be created whereby only aggregate data would be input into HMIS.

Data Collection: 8.9

Develop and support technology that will allow single data entry for multiple databases (such as ShelterBase, NFSA, and HMIS) for domestic violence programs.

Currently, shelter programs that participate on multiple databases must input data multiple times, creating the need for increased staffing. The capability to link databases together needs to be explored and developed so that data only needs to be entered once. Ideally, domestic violence programs would be able to use the empowerment case management tool such as the Need for Services Assessment (NFSA, discussed in the Victim Services/Crisis Response section), have all the information uploaded into ShelterBase for reporting requirements, and then uploaded into HMIS to create the aggregate data needed for HUD.